

Message Text

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ACTION SCI-04

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CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2211

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY OSLO

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FROM YODER AND HEG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: XV, TGEN, BE

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF ANTARCTIC MATTERS IN BRUSSELS

1. MEETING WITH VAN DER ESSEN COVERED WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS. VAN DER ESSEN, WHO PLANS TO ATTEND PREPCOM MEETING HAD NOT SEEN NORWEGIAN DIPLOMATIC NOTE (OSLO 4267) ON PROPOSED AGENDA WHICH ALSO SUGGESTED DISCUSSIONS ON SUBSTANCE OF ANTARCTIC MINERAL RESOURCES TAKE PLACE AT PREPCOM.

2. VAN DER ESSEN INDICATED BELGIUM WOULD HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY IF CONSULTATIVE MEETING IS HELD IN APRIL AS SCHEDULED. HE STATED BELGIAN ACCEPTANCE OF APRIL DATE WAS CONDITIONED ON NO OVERLAP WITH LOS MEETING AND SAID BELGIUM MIGHT NOT BE REPRESENTED AT APRIL

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CONSULTATIVE MEETING. (COMMENT: NON-ATTENDANCE BY

BELGIUM COULD LEAD TO SERIOUS PROCEDURAL PROBLEMS).

3. BELGIUM MOVING TOWARD SUPPORT OF A PERMANENT BUREAU OR SECRETARIAT FOR ANTARCTIC CONSULTATIVE ORGANIZATION AND IS IN AGREEMENT WITH ALL U.S. PROPOSED ADDITIONS TO CONSULTATIVE AGENDA. ALSO BELIEVES MATTER OF RADIOACTIVE WASTEDISPOSAL SHOULD BE DISCUSSED.

4. ON QUESTIONS OF RESOURCES VAN DER ESSEN SAID BELGIUM WOULD PREFER TO SETTLE THE MATTER WITHIN TREATY FORUM BUT HE FORESAW GREAT DIFFICULTY IN ACHIEVING ANY SUCH RESOLUTION. IN ANY CASE, BELGIUM STRONGLY BELIEVES ISSUE SHOULD BE WORKED OUT AMONGST TREATY, WHETHER PARTIES INSIDE OR OUTSIDE THE TREATY FRAME-WORK, AND SHOULD NOT BECOME PART OF THE LOS DISCUSSIONS.

5. BELGIUM HAS NO NEW IDEAS THAT MIGHT LEAD TO A RESOLUTION OF ANTARCTIC RESOURCE QUESTION. VAN DER ESSEN STATED THAT IN HIS VEIW IT WAS NOW TOO LATE TO CONTEMPLATE A MORATORIUM AND WHILE THE RESOURCE ISSUE WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT IT MUST BE DEALT WITH DIRECTLY. HE VERY POINTEDLY REMINDED U.S. TEAM THAT EVERYONE WAS LOOKING TO THE U.S. TO ASSERT LEADERSHIP IN THIS MATTER, AND THAT BELGIUM, LIKE MOST OTHERS, WAS WAITING TO HEAR U.S. PROPOSALS TOWARD A SOLUTION.

6 BELGIAN GOVERNMENT HAS NOT HAD INQUIRIES FROM INDUSTRY REGARDING ANTARCTIC RESOURCE MATTERS; HOWEVER, IF BELGIAN FIRMS DESIRE TO UNDERTAKE RESOURCE RELATED ACTIVITIES IN ANTARCTIC TREATY AREA, THE GOVERNMENT HAS NO MEANS TO PREVENT THE UNDERTAKING.

7. VAN DER ESSEN DID NOT PRESS FOR SPECIFIC U.S. VIEWS ON RESOURCE ISSUE AND DID NOT EXPRESS SUPRISE THAT U.S. TEAM HAD SO LITTLE OF SUBSTANCE ON THIS SUBJECT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS BILATERAL DISCUSSION. HE STATED THAT HE HAS NOT HAD TIME TO DEVOTE TO ANTARCTIC ISSUES FOR PAST SEVERAL MONTHS. FIRESTONE

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